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MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT:

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JOSEPH PETRILLO

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FRAN FLOREZ

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DONNA ANDREWS

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ROD DIRIDON

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MEHDI MORSHED

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA; TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 2004

3:00 P.M.

Transcript of April 13, 2004 Public Hearing

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS,
taken at One Gateway Plaza, Boardroom,
Los Angeles, California, commencing at
3:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 13, 2004,
before Martin Spee, CSR 10303

HUTCHINGS NO.: 55899-NO

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(Whereupon, at 3:00 p.m. the Open House commenced.)

MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Okay. It's 4 o'clock. The time we're supposed to start.

All right. This is the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

I'm calling to order the hearing on the California High-Speed Rail Authority's Environmental Impact Report and Impact Statement.

These are a series of hearings that are being held throughout the state to get the comments from the public about high-speed rail, and about the analysis that is contained in the Environmental Impact Report and the Environmental Impact Statement.

And to me this is the most important part of the Environmental Impact Report in the state of California because, from my own standpoint, many years ago I was one of the people that drafted, on behalf of the Sierra Club, those additions to the

Environmental Impact Report that required this type of analysis, and required that the conclusions of the Environmental Impact Report, in terms of the environmental recommendations, be adopted subject to the ability of the agency to override that for certain very specific overriding needs.

What occurs in any Environmental Impact Report, especially one on a project of this type and a project of this scope is that the agency retains the best consultants they can find, and they write a report that is presented and you have seen as the administrative document. That report is the best that they can do as experts in this field.

But the way the law is written, that is not the final word. The real important word is what happens after, when we take those initial documents that are the base for the analysis, the basic analysis that we can do with all of these experts that are involved and submit it to you, the people, to comment on, to look at, to chew over, and in return to comment to us in these public hearings.

It is those comments that we are required by law to treat with utmost seriousness to respond to, to analyze, because we all understand that even the best of experts may miss issues that need to be

analyzed in the EIR.

These comments, then, all of them, all of them, have to be responded to by the consultants, analyzed by the consultants, and included in a final document. But even that final document is subject to the adoption of the agency in charge.

So it is absolutely essential that you give

8 us your comments, you be as hard on us as you can
9 possibly be, and as hard on the document as you can
10 possibly be, if you find that there are weaknesses
11 that we have expressed in the document.

12 So that we can fully analyze that because
13 the success of California's Environmental Quality
14 Act really depends not on the quality of our
15 consultants, but the quality on you, the people who
16 comment on it, and our ability to analyze that.

17 Now, this afternoon's hearing is one of a
18 series being conducted throughout the state. And
19 its purpose is to receive the public and agency
20 input on the document, as I said. It is important
21 to me and everyone else that as much of your
22 comments are put in writing, in addition to the oral
23 comments because that will make it easier for our
24 consultants to analyze.

25 There are a few ground rules just that we

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1 have to follow just for orderly reasons.

2 One, I will be calling your names one at a
3 time. In some instances, I may be calling more than
4 one name so that you can be prepared to be the next
5 speaker. I will be calling people based upon the
6 names in these cards as they have been submitted to
7 me.

8 When you come up, please state your name and
9 affiliation before you make your comments. All
10 comments are being recorded so that they can be
11 reviewed by our consultants as part of the comment
12 process.

13 To accommodate all speakers in the time
14 frame provided, at least in terms of their speaking,
15 we would ask that you limit your testimony to three
16 minutes, and submit to us written documents.

17 Now, in some cases we will have agreed to
18 longer terms where there is a number of people that
19 would have all ordinarily testified, but that they
20 have organized themselves into a single cohesive
21 presentation, and from an organizational standpoint,
22 we will go along with that. And today we have a
23 group of people from Palmdale who have organized
24 themselves into a single presentation, and we will
25 give them extra time because, actually, it may end

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1 up in less time overall.

2 Again, as I said, all comments will be
3 responded to in the final Environmental Impact
4 Report. So please try to make your comments as
5 specific as you can. So that the analyst can
6 understand what it is that you are objecting to or
7 supporting or agreeing with.

8 And finally, the purpose of tonight's
9 hearing, again, is to hear from you, not to hear
10 from us. We may ask a question here and there to
11 clarify certain points. But the purpose of this
12 hearing is not what we may or may not decide or what

13 we may -- the members of the authority, may feel one
14 way or another. But basically to hear from you so
15 it can be commented on.

16 One thing to announce that the comment
17 period, the period when you can get in written
18 comments or appear at any of these hearings, has
19 been extended to August 31, from what was
20 previously.

21 So this is the new close of comment period.
22 This is to allow as many people to comment,
23 especially in those areas where we have serious
24 controversies.

25 Finally, our Environmental Impact Report and
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1 our Environmental Impact Statement, which is the
2 federal version, is a joint document with the FRA,
3 the federal FRA.

4 We have another meeting in Los Angeles, but
5 Ms. Andrews wants to make a statement.

6 MS. DONNA ANDREWS: First of all, I want to
7 welcome everyone here. And I'm especially delighted
8 to see such a wonderful turnout.

9 Having been involved in this process now for
10 over ten years, I'm especially delighted with the
11 representation we have here today. It's very
12 important when you have something this important
13 that you have the type of leadership we have here
14 today.

15 So I want to personally welcome Supervisor
16 Mike Antonovich, Antonio Villaraigosa, our speaker
17 and city council member. This shows a great deal of
18 support. Brian Williams, our deputy mayor, and all
19 of you.

20 So again, I'm here. I am from Southern
21 California, from Los Angeles. I am especially
22 committed to this happening, and understand the need
23 for this.

24 And as my great chairman said earlier, we're
25 looking to your comments, and this is a very

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1 important process. The public participation aspect
2 of this is the most important.

3 So thank you very much for all of you
4 attending today.

5 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: A couple of other
6 points. Mr. David Ballentine (phonetic) from the
7 FRA is here. If he could come forward, he can --
8 come over and sit here in case there is any
9 questions.

10 MR. ROD DIRIDON: I don't know whether he is
11 still here, but us old timers need to stick
12 together. I want to introduce a former member of
13 the county board of supervisors.

14 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: All right. We will
15 begin the hearing with the public officials who have
16 signed our speaker cards, starting with Antonio
17 Villaraigosa of the L.A. City Council.

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-TESTIMONY-

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BY MR. ANTONIO VILLARAIGOSA: Mr. Chairman, members, thank you for allowing me to speak before you today.

Member Andrews mentioned my former role as speaker of the California State Assembly. I was also a -- for brief period of time, the chair of the

Assembly Transportation Committee, and I now sit, not only on the MTA board, again for a second stint, but also I am the chair of the Los Angeles Transportation Committee.

From those early days in the legislature where Mr. Morshed and I first began to work together, this idea of high-speed rail seemed to me then as an idea that was -- whose time it had come here in California.

When you look to the fact that in this state, and indeed around the nation, airport travel is increasing. We know that most people don't want to live next to an airport. And the ones who do aren't very happy about it.

And so efforts to increase and expand our airports have met to opposition at almost every single turn. Here in the region I don't need to document what's happened at Burbank, what's happened in Orange County, or at LAX.

So it seems to me that high-speed rail, which costs about half of what it would cost -- in fact, less than half of what it would cost the \$82 billion to rebuild our roads and highways, and in a way to address congestion and traffic, it would cost one-half of that. To build high-speed rail in

the state of California.

In this region alone, Los Angeles and the L.A. County metropolitan region, the estimates are that we're going to grow two cities the size of Chicago in the next 20 years. Much of that growth is centered in the northern part of our county in the Antelope Valley.

So I'm here not only to bring to you the anonymous resolution on the part of L.A. City Council in support of high-speed rail, but also our anonymous declaration that any high-speed rail alignment must include to be viable. The Antelope Valley alignment.

We know that that area, as I said, is the fastest growing in the region. We know that it would cost less than the route it takes us over the Grapevine, substantially less.

Somewhere the estimates are -- they range, but substantially less than it would cost up the Grapevine. We know that the support that you see here, not only the political support, but there's a great deal of consensus in this region that any

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PH-LA1001-2

23 high-speed rail option must include the
24 Antelope Valley.
25 Today the City of Los Angeles, with the
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1 concurrence of the mayor, adopted this resolution,
2 and we wanted to bring it to your attention to
3 formally say to you that we support high-speed rail.
4 We think its time has come.

5 We intend to work very hard in support of
6 this very, very important investment in California's
7 future, in California's infrastructure. But in
8 order for this to be a viable option for Southern
9 Californians, and indeed for the entire state, in
10 order for us to do this in a cost-effective way, in
11 a way that respects the taxpayers of region and
12 state, we believe that the Antelope Valley alignment
13 is critical. And so we also come here in unanimous
14 support of that alignment, as well.

15 So I want to thank you for allowing me to
16 say a few words in support of this. As I said, I
17 have a long history and involvement in
18 transportation. I knew Mehdi Morshed when his hair
19 was black. And obviously the challenge of
20 high-speed rail has worked wonders on him.

21 But I'm happy to be here and willing to
22 answer any questions that you might have.

23 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very much
24 Council Member Villaraigosa, and the change in hair
25 color happens to all of us.

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1 MR. ANTONIO VILLARAIGOSA: It's beginning to
2 happen to me, as well. I know you will slow that
3 process down by supporting this Antelope Valley
4 alignment.

5 Thank you so much.

6 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Given my position as
7 chairman, I have the ability to speak whenever I
8 want. So I want to carry on something that Council
9 Member Villaraigosa said, at least in terms of the
10 state as a whole.

11 According to the environmental impact report
12 that we prepared, the state is expected to grow
13 between now and 2020 by 11 million people. And that
14 growth is not from immigration, but from internal
15 growth.

16 The question is what alternatives do we
17 really have to deal with the intercity of
18 transportation of those people and the people we
19 have now?

20 It's expected that those 11 million, and in
21 the future we will have 68 million new intercity
22 trips on our highways, according to the
23 Environmental Impact Report; that if we were to
24 build the roads and the airports to carry these same
25 trips, according to the Environmental Impact

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1 Report -- and again the question of whether that is

PH-LA1001-2
cont

2 accurate or not is something that we are exploring

3 now -- would require 3,000 miles of new freeways,
4 and two and a half new, completely new,
5 international airports.

6 How do we do that, if we don't do something
7 like high-speed rail?

8 For me as chairman, that's something I would
9 like to know. That's something we're exploring as
10 part of this Environmental Impact Report.

11 And I thank Council Member Villaraigosa for
12 his testimony. Thank you very much.

13 MR. ANTONIO VILLARAIGOSA: Thank you.

14 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: The next person is
15 Mike Antonovich, L.A. County Board of Supervisors.

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-TESTIMONY-

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BY MR. MIKE ANTONOVICH: Mr. Chairman,
members of the committee, it's a pleasure to be here
this afternoon, to speak to you from another side of
this podium. I'm joined with my colleague Antonio
Villaraigosa, who is usually sitting up there where
you are sitting.

This is a very important issue that impacts
not just my district, but the entire County of

Los Angeles. And for the record, the MTA did pass a
resolution authored by Mayor Frank Robert of
Lancaster, Antonio Villaraigosa from Los Angeles,
and myself from the Board of Supervisors.

Furthermore, the Board of Supervisors has
also unanimously passed a resolution to support the
Antelope Valley alignment. This offers very many
advantages over the Grapevine because it's going to
serve approximately 750,000 more residents and
260,000 more employees.

And as was stated by the former speaker,
this is one of the fastest growing areas in our
region. The Antelope Valley has a population of
350,000, which will be doubling by the year 2020.
It also relieves congestion on a very congested
roadway, and that's the State Highway 14, and the
I-5.

And this is an area along with, I might say,
the 138 that have had many serious accidents and
fatalities throughout its history. It will also
relieve congestion at LAX and other overused
airports in the region by providing direct access to
the Palmdale Regional Airport, which will begin
having a service of flights beginning next month to
Las Vegas from Scenic Air, which is now moving into

that area to serve that community.

It will also help with the Antelope Valley's
economic development in providing jobs and
opportunities for those citizens in that part of the
county, and provide approximately 15 to 40 percent

PH-LA1002-I

6 less in net benefit savings over the some
7 \$900 million during it's first three decades of
8 operation. And that's important.

9 Along with that, it's essential to make
10 the -- make the right decision for the high-speed
11 train project, and enhance its abilities of having
12 that bond passage by having this type of support.

13 Again, it's in the fastest growing region of
14 this county, and we look forward to working with you
15 to see it's development.

16 Thank you very much.

17 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very much
18 Supervisor Antonovich.

19 The next speaker is Don Bankhead from the
20 City of Fullerton City Council.

21
22 -TESTIMONY-

23 BY MR. DON BANKHEAD: Thank you,
24 Mr. Chairman.

25 It's from the great City of Fullerton.

26
27 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: The great City of
28 Fullerton.

29 MR. DON BANKHEAD: Good afternoon,
30 Mr. Chairman, and members of the High-Speed Rail
31 Authority Board.

32 My name is Don Bankhead. I'm a council
33 member and past mayor of the City of Fullerton.
34 I've been on the city council since 1988. And have
35 been involved in most transit issues since then,
36 including \$15 million in projects in our own
37 transportation center, the Orange County CenterLine
38 project and the high-speed rail.

39 I'm delivering a letter -- I'm delivering a
40 letter signed by our mayor to you today, Mike
41 Clesceri, relating the current high-speed rail
42 proposal as reflected in the draft EIR document.
43 Fullerton has been an active participant in the past
44 rail improvement effort for many years.

45 To date, the city, Caltrans, and Amtrak
46 jointly invested over \$15 million into the Fullerton

47 Transportation Center, and have plans for further
48 improvements in the future, including a 500-space
49 parking structure.

50 Including Amtrak and Metrolink, over 959,000
51 people use our transportation center annually,

52 making it one of the busiest stations in the region.

53 The California High-Speed Rail Authority has
54 been studying various alignment options between
55 Los Angeles and San Diego. Fullerton has been
56 represented at several of these meetings inclusive
57 of high-speed rail between Los Angeles and
58 San Diego, is essential to accommodate future travel
59 patterns, increased densities and provide a full
60 range of transportation mode options.

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PH-LA1003-I

10 The screening process, to date, has been
11 productive, and the recommended alignment for
12 further study appears reasonable, with the exception
13 of using the alternative Union Pacific right of way
14 from Los Angeles to Anaheim.

15 This alignment would be unnecessary and
16 costly duplication of very expensive improvements.
17 Given the scope of development that Caltrans is
18 proposing for the Los Angeles corridor.

19 These costly connections from the UP right
20 of way, the Anaheim Transportation Center should
21 screen out that alternative without the expense of
22 further study. The joint effort of high-speed rail
23 authority and Caltrans to provide track capacity on
24 the existing loss and corridor alignment would be
25 the most cost-effective approach.

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1 Fullerton is also concerned about the
2 proposed stops for the HSR trains. Limiting the
3 stops to Anaheim and Irvine would not provide the
4 best opportunity to track riders from other
5 communities. It would be prudent to establish other
6 city pairs that would be stops at different times.

7 For instance, Anaheim and Irvine would be
8 served by some trains, while Fullerton and Santa Ana
9 would be served by others.

10 Fullerton requests this provision be
11 included in the final high-speed rail plan. An
12 additional issue is whether to have the electrified
13 portion of the system end at Los Angeles. We feel
14 to extend it to Anaheim or extend it to Irvine would
15 be more beneficial.

16 Since the improvements would likely be
17 phased over a period of years, including the
18 electrified segment to Anaheim, Irvine, in the first
19 phase, would be our preference. With the extension
20 to Irvine as part of the future phase.

21 The extension of the electrified system
22 would be a benefit to the environment in this area.
23 Financially the studies, to date, have assumed that
24 connections to the high-speed alignment through
25 Riverside would be made only from Anaheim and/or

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1 Irvine.

2 We would like to point out that Fullerton
3 already connects to Riverside by the Santa Fe line.
4 Upgrading the existing line would surely be less
5 costly than requiring an all-new right of way and
6 constructing new improvements to Anaheim or Irvine.

7 If the high-speed system is a success as
8 projected, more than one connection may be
9 desirable.

10 The Fullerton City Council feels strongly
11 about these issues, and I hope you give them serious
12 consideration. We look forward to continue our
13 involvement with the developments in the county and
14 Southern California.

PH-LA1003-1
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PH-LA1003-2

15 I want to thank you for the opportunity to
16 speak with you today.

17 And in closing, I would like to state that
18 if rail is not our future, certainly the widening
19 freeways can't be part of it. Rail has to be our
20 future. It's the only way of moving people from
21 here to there without the cost. Widening freeways
22 cost more money than building rails. So let's get
23 it done.

24 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very much.
25 I can state that the Environmental Impact

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1 Report before you indicates that the cost of these
2 additional lanes or freeways is much more expensive
3 than the high-speed rail.

4 Again, that's the conclusion in the
5 Environmental Impact Report, and we are looking at
6 people's comments if they disagree.

7 The next speaker will be Brian Williams, the
8 mayor of the City of L.A.'s representative to
9 discuss --

10

11 -TESTIMONY-

PH-LA1004

12 BY MR. BRIAN WILLIAMS: Thank you,
13 Mr. Chairman.

14 I have a statement on the behalf of the
15 mayor. This was a crucial issue for him to opine
16 upon. He will join the city council in their

17 resolution to sign that forthwith.

18 The statement from the mayor reads as
19 follows:

20 "The transportation is the life blood of our
21 community. Without a viable, efficient, and
22 environmentally sound method of moving goods and
23 people in our community, the pulse of Los Angeles
24 would fail. We must do all we can to keep
25 Los Angeles and our state moving. This is why I

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1 support the California high-speed train project.

2 "This project, which will be the single
3 largest public works project ever proposed in the
4 United States, will provide much needed jobs, help
5 relieve congestion at our busiest airports, and
6 relieve traffic congestion. It's crucial that the
7 best possible route be chosen for the system.

8 "After reviewing all materials, it's clear
9 to me there's really one choice that makes sense.
10 The route must go through the Antelope Valley.
11 There's solid reasons for this.

12 "Antelope Valley route will reduce traffic
13 congestion on the I-5 and SR-14, making an
14 efficient -- and ease the burden on the rest of the
15 Southern California freeway system.

16 "Secondly, it will relieve congestion at LAX
17 and other airports by providing a viable alternative
18 for travel to the Bay Area and other destinations.

PH-LA1003-3

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PH-LA1004-2

19 "Finally, this route will provide greater
20 ridership revenues. L.A. wants to help the Rail
21 Authority make a wise decision. We believe the
22 Antelope Valley route makes sense.
23 "By directing the California high-speed
24 train project, Los Angeles, and, in fact, the entire
25 southland will benefit through the integration of

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1 the Antelope Valley population centers through an
2 economically sound transportation center. The
3 Antelope Valley center provides a great investment
4 in our future."

5 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very much.

6 The next speaker is the Honorable Shirley
7 McCracken. Because I forgot to previously add the
8 adjective, I will add it here, from the great City
9 of Anaheim.

10

11 -TESTIMONY-

PH-LA1005

12 BY HON. SHRILEY MC CRACKEN: Thank you.

13 Home of the Mighty Ducks and Angels.

14 Chairman and board members. I'm Shirley
15 McCracken. Council members of the City of Anaheim.
16 I thank you for the opportunity to comment on this
17 exciting project.

18 From this location, we are a mere 30 miles
19 from Anaheim. An international tourist destination
20 with the largest convention center on the west
21 coast. With more than 20 million annual visitors,
22 we are an economic hub of the second most populous
23 county in California.

24 Two other Orange County cities are situated
25 between Los Angeles and Anaheim. These cities are

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1 Buena Park and Fullerton. And you heard from the
2 council member of Fullerton, are in favor of
3 California high-speed rail along the Los Angeles
4 alignment.

5 Anaheim stronger favors this service to our
6 city. Other Orange County cities south of Anaheim
7 may comment they did not want California high-speed
8 rail in their cities.

9 This should not confuse the fact that
10 high-speed rail is needed for Orange County, and it
11 can be provided with the willing partnership of
12 North Orange County cities along the Los Angeles
13 alignment to Anaheim.

14 We are preparing for California high-speed
15 rail stops in both Anaheim and Fullerton, and you
16 heard the council member from Fullerton explain how
17 they are doing it.

18 The Anaheim station at Angel Stadium is in a
19 redevelopment project area. Transit Authority
20 development is being provided for in our city
21 general plan update providing 7 million square feet
22 in mixed use and residential units.

PH-LA1004-2
cont

PH-LA1005-1

PH-LA1005-2

23 The land use is premised on a third track on
24 the Los Angeles corridor for the high-speed rail
25 service. California high-speed rail will document

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1 the existing Amtrak and Metrolink service and
2 enhance our Anaheim intermodal center. Also it will
3 accommodate our connection to Ontario International
4 Airport providing additional transfer opportunities
5 and significant additional ridership.

6 These regional connections are vital for
7 Orange County residents, businesses, and tourists,
8 funding for Anaheim Regional Transportation Center
9 is a top priority with up to \$240 million expected
10 from the Federal Transportation Authorization.

11 \$100 million of this can be a direct match
12 for California high-speed rail for grade separation,
13 platform extensions, and station parking. In this
14 manner we become a true partner with you. I hope I
15 made clear that North Orange County is preparing for
16 high-speed rail service.

17 And let me conclude with two requests.
18 First, include North Orange County in the initial
19 operating segment. The 30 miles from Los Angeles to
20 Anaheim is among the easiest to implement, in the
21 existing Los Angeles rail corridor. And will
22 provide the reason for Orange County voters to
23 support the ballot measure.

24 I respectfully request that the commission
25 support necessary legislative change to make this a

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1 reality.

2 Finally, get this issue on the 2006 ballot
3 so that we can enjoy the benefits of high-speed rail
4 as soon as possible.

5 Thank you for the opportunity to speak with
6 you today.

7 MR. ROD DIRIDON: Thank you. Madam Council
8 Member, thank you for being with us.

9 I've been in your seat in prior years. I
10 know how important the downtown station can be to
11 focus growth and revitalize areas that sometimes
12 have been forgotten in our downtowns.

13 If a station is located in your downtown,
14 eventually the land around it will increase in value
15 dramatically. You indicate you already have a
16 redevelopment agency, a value capture mechanism.

17 Did I understand you to suggest that you
18 would be interested in building the station,
19 assuming that the high-speed rail program tracks in
20 and so on?

21 HON. SHIRLEY MC CRACKEN: Yes. We currently
22 applied for funds for a multimodal center. We
23 already have, coming into the station, Amtrak and
24 Metrolink service. We have carpool lanes that
25 directly would go into that stadium facility. And

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1 as well as bus transportation.

PH-LA1005-2
cont

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PH-LA1005-4
cont

2 And we have, also, electrical charging
3 stations for electrical vehicles. Ultimately any
4 kind of rail that is felt in Orange County will
5 ultimately come, also, into that station.

6 So it truly will be a multimodal center.
7 And discussion of rail from Ontario to Anaheim
8 would, again, come into that station.

9 So yes, we would be building it in
10 partnership with a variety of different
11 constituents, and hopefully high-speed rail will be
12 part of that.

13 MR. ROD DIRIDON: You bet. I did understand
14 what you were saying. My question was a little bit
15 rhetorical to allow you to emphasize.

16 But it was also designed to allow these
17 other city representatives, who are in the audience
18 today, to recognize that if you leave it to the
19 high-speed rail authority, we will not build you a
20 grand station. We do not have the money to build
21 grand stations.

22 If, though, you're able to turn that value
23 that we're going to create in your downtown centers
24 around and put that value into the stations and
25 other amenities around the station, then you will

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1 have something that will be grand and wonderful
2 forever. A great statement for your community that
3 really will be paid for by the high-speed rail
4 program because that will help to increase the value
5 of the land.

6 And you will be able to design the stations
7 to meet your needs, whatever you like, rather than
8 have us build something that may not fit your
9 downtown area.

10 It's a great program, and we appreciate it
11 and appreciate the example you are setting.

12 HON. SHIRLEY MC CRACKEN: Thank you. Our
13 city is a few years short of 100 years old. We
14 realize it's one of the oldest cities in California.

15 We have been visionary since the time we
16 were just a small village. And I think we are still
17 visionary, and we would like to be a partner with
18 you in developing this vision for California.

19 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very much,
20 Council Member. And you raised a very significant
21 issue. One that is not necessarily discussed in
22 great length in the Environmental Impact Report.

23 But if there is the high-speed rail in
24 California, the importance of it connecting
25 downtowns is -- can't be overlooked. It is

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1 absolutely essential that it be part of downtown's
2 revitalization.

3 There have been studies, actually, in
4 San Jose that showed the largest increase in
5 downtown values from all alternative transportation
6 approaches comes from the location of a true

7 railroad station in that area. Not necessarily
8 light rail, but interestingly enough, heavy rail
9 results in the greatest, like high-speed rail
10 results in the greatest increase in value within a
11 half mile to a mile of the location of the station.

12 So this is an important element of the
13 high-speed rail program, if it proceeds ahead, is
14 the revitalization and development of many of the
15 downtowns that will be along the route.

16 Our next speaker is Larry Grooms, who
17 represents Assemblywoman Sharon Runner.

18 -TESTIMONY-

PH-LA1006-1 19 BY MR. LARRY GROOMS: Thank you,
20 Chairman.

21 Members of the commission, ladies and
22 gentleman, I'm Larry Grooms, senior field
23 representative for Assemblywoman Sharon Runner.

24 The assemblywoman regrets very much that she
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1 was not able to be here to speak with you personally
2 this afternoon, but business in the legislature kept
3 her in Sacramento. She did, however, ask that I
4 come and make a few remarks on her behalf.

5 I submitted a letter from her, which she
6 sent from the capital office, to your staff.

7 Just briefly, the assemblywoman asked me to
8 express her belief that the Bakersfield to
9 Los Angeles segment be adopted as the final segment
10 through the Antelope Valley. In her view, the
11 Palmdale route provides mutual benefit to both the
12 project and the public.

13 The Antelope is, as you've heard, and I will
14 not belabor the point, the fastest growing area in
15 Southern California, certainly.

16 And the population projections are real.
17 Housing is being built by the hundreds. It's the
18 most affordable housing in Los Angeles County. And
19 this is attracting new families. Many of whom
20 commuted on the freeways every day, on the Metrolink
21 train, and on buses to jobs in the Los Angeles
22 basin.

23 Having the high-speed rail come through the
24 Antelope Valley will help facilitate these people
25 who must commute into the basin and actually supply

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1 much of the work force here in the more highly
2 priced housing market.

3 Aside from keeping commuters -- 50,000 plus
4 commuters a day from the freeway, it will also clear
5 the air. Environmentally this is a good program.

6 The Palmdale Regional Airport, which has
7 pending service coming within about 30 days or so,
8 is one of the major alternatives for expanding air
9 service to the Los Angeles basin, which will have to
10 expand in the future regardless of what happens with
11 high-speed rail. And Palmdale is the viable

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12 alternative.

13 The assemblywoman asked me to express her
14 view that the alignment be to the people where the
15 people are, where the success of the system can
16 begin immediately, and not at some far-flung future
17 date.

18 On behalf of Assemblywoman Runner, I thank
19 you for your attention. If you have any questions,
20 I will be happy to answer them.

21 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: No. Thank you very
22 much.

23 As you know, the environmental impact report
24 really is a report that analyzes, because it's a
25 program report, not every specific mile or foot of

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1 the rail, but analyzes whether or not high-speed
2 rail is more environmentally beneficial than
3 alternatives.

4 And until that is -- until we finalize that,
5 obviously, that's still a question even though --
6 however, having said that, I've heard from a
7 legislator that high-speed rail is everyone's
8 second-favorite project.

9 So if any support that we can get from the
10 legislature to make it a first favorite project
11 would assist us in moving this along.

12 MR. LARRY GROOMS: Thank you.

13 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: The next speaker is
14 Rick Sandzimier, City of Irvine, and which is --
15 just to let the people from Palmdale know, this is
16 the last public official or representative of public
17 official we have. So I will have them make their
18 presentation next.

19

20 -TESTIMONY-

21 BY MR. RICK SANDZIMIER: Good afternoon.

22 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: I'm assuming the mayor
23 of Palmdale will be part of the Palmdale
24 presentation. I'm sorry.

25 MR. RICK SANDZIMIER: Good afternoon,

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1 Chairman Petrillo and members of the authority.
2 Good afternoon, and thank you for giving me the
3 opportunity to speak here today.

4 I'm Rick Sandzimier. My challenge at the
5 City of Irvine is to look at the long-range vision
6 of transportation and transportation solutions for
7 that city.

8 City of Irvine, which is in the heart of
9 Orange County, about 50 miles south of where we are
10 today, is pleased to be here today to demonstrate
11 our continued support for your efforts that are
12 geared towards long-term transportation innovations
13 and solutions.

14 As we are in the midst of our public review
15 period, and there's a significant amount of data to
16 digest, I don't want to leave anything with the view

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17 that we have no concerns.

18 What I'm here today is to tell you we're
19 excited about the proposed California high-speed
20 rail. We're excited about the possibilities and
21 opportunities that this project might bring.

22 We can all look out the window today and
23 realize how fortunate we are to be here in Southern
24 California. It's obvious why more and more people
25 want to locate here. There's still opportunity for

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1 growth.

2 However, that growth comes with continued
3 thought and continued vision for our future. The
4 efficient movement of goods, services, and people is
5 paramount to our future in that success.

6 We don't want our quality of life to be
7 defined by words such as gridlock. And without
8 projects like the proposed high-speed rail, I'm
9 afraid we might get there. This movement of people
10 and goods can be better achieved with balance and
11 choice of travel modes.

12 In the City of Irvine, we are a hub in
13 Orange County. We have all the freeways that go
14 from Orange County to San Diego coming through us.
15 We have toll roads that feed into our city. We have
16 Metrolink and Amtrak services that we continue to
17 improve. And we got a growing Irvine Transportation
18 Center where we are working with the Orange County
19 Transportation Authority currently on providing
20 possibly another 500-space parking structure because
21 of the growing demand at our transportation center.

22 We see alternative modes of transportation
23 are definitely in demand, and people are choosing
24 those and we're happy to see that.

25 There's still a lot of details to be worked

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1 out. We're committed to work through those details
2 cooperatively with the California High-Speed Rail
3 Authority.

4 With our adjacent cities, Fullerton and
5 Santa Ana, we in Irvine are a little south of them,
6 but we're committed to work with those agencies as a
7 team to figure out which is the proper sharing of
8 cities or where the stops should be.

9 We are excited that the Irvine is being
10 considered as a potential stop. And we encourage
11 that that alternative be left in the plans so we can
12 move through the steps with that as an option.

13 In closing, I would like to commend the
14 efforts of the California High-Speed Rail Authority
15 staff to move the project through this important
16 critical phase, the environmental review, to go out
17 and hold these hearings.

18 This is definitely the most critical part of
19 the process, to encourage people to come up and say
20 what's on their mind. Without that input, we're not
21 going to have a successful project as we want.

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22 The city will be completing our technical
23 review, and we will be submitting our detailed
24 comments within the review period.

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25 Thank you for the opportunity to make these
0036 comments.

1 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very much.

2 Right now in the world today, Japan, Spain,
3 England, France, Germany, and Italy, have, or are
4 developing extensive high-speed rail systems.

5 They started it like we're proposing here
6 with a small part of the system, and have found that
7 it works with their system.

8 Recently Taiwan, Korea, and even China, have
9 either started or instituted high-speed rail or
10 committed to high-speed rail.

11 And most recently, the proposal has been
12 made to make a high-speed rail system from the Far
13 East through Russia and into Europe. It appears to
14 be, at least for the rest of the world, a
15 transportation system of the future.

16 And I think we in the United States have to
17 think seriously about whether or not we should, or
18 whether it is beneficial for us to do that here.
19 Here in California, since we have the opportunity to
20 do what California does very well, which is to lead
21 the rest of the nation.

22 Now, the next -- anybody else want to
23 comment?

24 Okay. Is there anybody in the public that
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1 wants to speak independent of the Palmdale
2 presentation that we may not have?

3 Can the Palmdale people begin their
4 presentation?

5 And since we have taken some of the public
6 officials up front, we please hope that you would
7 shorten your presentation on the backside.

8 Thank you.

9
10 -TESTIMONY-

PH-LA1008

11 BY HON. JIM LEDFORD: Honorable chairman,
12 authority members, I am Jim Ledford, mayor of the
13 City of Palmdale. I'm also chairman of the North
14 County Transportation Coalition.

15 And I appreciate the opportunity to speak to
16 you today. Certainly about a very important issue
17 for Southern California and the entire state, and it
18 happens to be the Number 1 project for our city for
19 Antelope Valley.

20 Decisions made today will affect the future
21 of our transportation system in this state, and
22 ultimately affect the economic viability and growth
23 nor the entire state of California.

24 Before we embark on this ambitious project,
25 the greatest public works project in our nation's

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1 history, we need to stop and ask ourselves if the
2 project meets the needs of our region and our state.

3 One of the first important choices is where
4 the train will go. There are two route choices to
5 connect Bakersfield and Los Angeles.

6 One will follow the I-5 alignment along the
7 Grapevine, and the other will go through the
8 Antelope Valley.

9 Today you will hear from your Southern
10 California elected officials, technical experts, and
11 researchers who will all point out why Southern
12 Californian's support the Antelope Valley route over
13 the interstate route, Interstate 5 route. We
14 believe all the facts support the Antelope Valley
15 route.

16 Before we go into all the reasons the
17 Antelope Valley route makes more sense, I would like
18 to explain why the route choice is so important for
19 Southern California and the state as a whole.

20 Choosing the right route is critical for
21 California and Californians need a transportation
22 system that takes them where they need to go. To
23 connect where most people live to where most people
24 work. To relieve traffic congestion in congested
25 areas. And provide cleaner air and more

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1 economically friendly ways to travel.

2 These are consistent with the authority's
3 own plans. In the early days of this project,
4 criteria was set to make sure the project would
5 benefit the citizens. The California High-Speed
6 Rail Act of 1996 specified that the high-speed rail
7 should help generate jobs and economic growth. And
8 be integrated with the existing transportation
9 networks.

10 The other correspondence from the authority
11 specified that the rail should be economically
12 feasible, publicly popular, and fiscally prudent.
13 It should support economic growth. And it should do
14 so in an environmental and fiscally responsible way.

15 The following slides will demonstrate why
16 the AV route is best for California. Certainly
17 we're going to save tax dollars at a time when the
18 state needs those dollars the most. And also
19 connect important population centers, and certainly
20 encourage job growth.

21 It would connect the regions next major
22 airport. And we heard earlier about the reluctance
23 of communities to accept airports, our communities
24 want the airports.

25 It also would relieve traffic in some of the
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1 most congested freeways in America. If we're going
2 to get cars off the road, we have to go where people
3 go.

4 And the AV route and is easier to build. It
5 reduces the risk of delay and cost overruns, and

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6 it's better for the environment.

7 And certainly air quality. It stands to
8 reason that certainly if more riders use the rail
9 and it goes where people go, it's going to generate
10 higher revenue, it's going to be better for the
11 taxpayers, it will serve more people.

12 And certainly it's going to be worth --
13 those benefits are well worth the few extra minutes
14 that Antelope Valley route will cost.

15 Let's compare the number of potential riders
16 of two routes. The I-5 route goes through the
17 Grapevine, an unpopulated pass through the
18 mountains. It's unlikely to support transportation
19 needs of anyone.

20 The AV route is estimated to have 750,000
21 more residents and 260,000 more employees by the
22 time the rail is built.

23 The bottom line, the added riders adds up to
24 a projected \$900 million more in net benefits than
25 the I-5 route over the first 33 years of operation.

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1 With me here today to go in more detail are
2 Bob Schaevitz and Thomas Holm (phonetic). And also
3 we have Professor Montabe (phonetic) here.

4 What we're going to do is give Mr. Bob
5 Schaevitz a introduction here. He's a
6 transportation specialist with over 30 years'
7 experience of transportation projects. His
8 background includes plans, economic feasibility, and
9 finance. As well as institutional planning policy
10 analysis and program management.

11 He's completed over 250 engagements for
12 public and private clients in four continents, and
13 is a contributor to regional forums and
14 infrastructure and planning.

15 Also with us is Thomas Holm, a principal and
16 director of environmental services with Michael
17 Braman (phonetic) Associates MBA in Irvine,
18 California. He has 27 years in diverse
19 environmental experience in a variety of
20 environmental transportation natural resource and
21 regulatory compliance programs.

22 His transportation and environmental project
23 experience includes major transportation corridors
24 and highways, rail alignment studies, including
25 presentations to the California-Nevada Train

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1 Commission.

2 I would like to turn this over to Bob
3 Schaevitz.

4 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: One minute. Excuse
5 me.

6 I would like to make a couple of requests
7 to -- I assume you will have an extensive comment to
8 us, written comments to us?

9 HON. JIM LEDFORD: Yes, sir.

10 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: One of the issues

11 about Palmdale is the effect of the additional 15
12 minutes that would take to travel from Los Angeles
13 to San Francisco in terms of the economic viability
14 of the system as a whole. Which our business plan
15 indicated that it does have significant questions on
16 viability or impacts on viability.

17 Either in your comments or later in your
18 written comments, I would like to see as much
19 technical information as you can because that's
20 probably one of the two most important issues that
21 we have to wrestle with, how do we deal with that
22 if, in fact, there is an impact, or are there
23 tradeoffs or something.

24 HON. JIM LEDFORD: Our goal is to give you
25 as much information to make this a clear choice.

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1 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: The second thing we
2 keep on hearing is the so-called growth-inducing
3 impact in the Antelope Valley. And while all the
4 projections show that the Antelope Valley is going
5 to grow, some comments on whether this is because
6 our Environmental Impact Report does analyze that to
7 some extent, some comments on that would be helpful
8 to us one way or the other.

9 HON. JIM LEDFORD: I understand that, and I
10 believe we can give you all of that information to
11 give you what you need. I think Bob Schaevitz is
12 going to help us right now on some analysis on the
13 ridership.

14

15 -TESTIMONY-

PH-LA1009

16 BY MR. BOB SCHAEVITZ: Mr. Chairman and
17 members of the board, thank you.

18 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Who are you with.

19 MR. BOB SCHAEVITZ: I'm a consultant to URS
20 Corporation. I have worked for the City of Palmdale
21 on this project since before my employment with
22 them. I've been involved over five years on issues
23 related to high-speed rail.

24 I used to work for Parsons Brinckerhoff in
25 my career. I've been in the transportation business

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1 all my adult life.

2 The issues -- I'm going to cover some very
3 specific points. I wanted to elaborate upon what
4 the mayor spoke, but I also will get back to the
5 issues of ridership, as well as my associates after
6 me.

7 The issue of growth, and we've documented
8 how all of the core costs prepared, not only by the
9 cities of the Antelope Valley, but also Los Angeles
10 County and also by SCAG, point to extensive growth
11 in the Antelope Valley, and there's reasons for
12 this.

13 It's basically low-cost growth. There's a
14 lot of land available. Infrastructure is relatively
15 inexpensive.

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16 One of the major issues facing the region
17 today is affordable houses, and Antelope Valley can
18 provide that. It also has an established industrial
19 base, such as Lockheed Martin and Boeing in place.
20 And a number of other high tech and
21 manufacturing-based businesses who are in place to
22 support them.

23 The issue really on growth is not so much
24 what induces growth overall. What induces growth in
25 California is the fact that there are a lot of

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1 people here, a lot of people who want to live here.

2 The issue is where do we put the growth and
3 what's the best and what's the best mode, density,
4 planning type, et cetera, to accommodate it.

5 It's our position, I believe it is supported
6 by the planning, those entities responsible for
7 long-range planning in the region, that the
8 Antelope Valley is an appropriate place to grow, and
9 as such, the forecasts and land use plans adopted by
10 SCAG and the transportation mode includes that
11 growth.

12 There's good growth and bad growth. In
13 terms of inducing growth and good growth, the IR
14 document, I believe, actually notes a small
15 reduction in the amount of growth, which would occur
16 in other less-desirable areas as a result of the
17 Palmdale station.

18 We are looking at that analysis, and we will
19 respond to you with detailed comments before the
20 close of the comment period.

21 But the point being is that I believe we can
22 make an extremely strong case that the project is
23 reinforcing an area that is designated for growth,
24 and that will provide not only just a place for
25 people to live, but a place where they can live, and

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1 access facilities that will relieve congestion and
2 improve air quality elsewhere in the region, and we
3 will respond on that.

4 Can I have the next slide after that.

5 We talked about, again, it's a business
6 center in the valley. It's a business friendly
7 location, which means to the extent that appropriate
8 uses of land can be encouraged within the region,
9 the Antelope Valley is willing and eager to support
10 them.

11 Next slide.

12 The airport is, perhaps, one of the single
13 most important issues we believe drives the decision
14 to Antelope Valley. There's been extensive planning
15 and controversy about how to accommodate this
16 phenomenal growth in air traffic which is
17 anticipated in the coming decades.

18 There was a proposal to expand LAX
19 dramatically. This has now been turned back, and it
20 is clear while there are facilities planned to

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21 improve operations at LAX, it will never be able to
22 accommodate all the growth which is projected.

23 Secondarily, there are other airports, as
24 well, which are reaching capacity limits. Burbank
25 will not grow. Long Beach will not grow. There's

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1 some room for growth in Ontario.

2 By and large if there's going to be a lot of
3 growth incurred, allowed in air traffic in the
4 county, then the Palmdale Regional Airport will have
5 to be a key player in accommodating that.

6 If that's the case, we believe there's a
7 tremendous value to allowing the residents of
8 Los Angeles County, and even the lower San Joaquin
9 Valley to access this airport in Palmdale. And that
10 supports that alignment decision.

11 Next slide.

12 There's not much in the way of quantitative
13 data on impacts to traffic. There's analysis on
14 stationary traffic, but much less on intercity
15 traffic. We will look at that and make comments on
16 that.

17 Nevertheless, given the fact that the IR
18 mentions, in one location, potential commuter
19 ridership of as much as 1.7 million per year, that
20 will clearly have a tremendous effect on congestion
21 levels on the 14 Freeway and on the I-5 Freeway, and
22 we will be able to document that for you in greater
23 detail as we're working on that analysis right now.

24 Less congestion, less air quality, less
25 minutes wasted in traffic. All of the reasons

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1 people speak to you today about why high-speed rail
2 is important will be added to within an alignment
3 through the Antelope Valley.

4 Next slide.

5 Regarding the impact of having a longer run
6 from Los Angeles to San Francisco, we have been told
7 repeatedly that the length of time involved is 6 to
8 9 minutes, not 12 or 15 minutes.

9 Given that amount of time that is a 6 --
10 less than 6 percent of the total running time of 150
11 minutes from Los Angeles to San Francisco, it is our
12 analysis, and we did traffic analysis of our own
13 earlier on where we believe that the amount of
14 additional ridership generated by the Palmdale
15 Airport and the Antelope Valley in general will more
16 than compensate for the -- any reduction in
17 long-hall ridership from San Francisco to
18 Los Angeles, which, in any event, has more options
19 in terms of air travel than do many other
20 communities in between, considering the central
21 valley and other communities in between, as well.

22 It is our assertion that the net ridership
23 benefit of the Antelope Valley is positive, not
24 negative. And as a result, you will actually have
25 better cash flow as a result.

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1 And again, we will submit this in writing to
2 you, and we have, in the past, and are always
3 willing to talk with your consultants including
4 Charles River, including Parsons Brinckerhoff, and
5 the other people to come to basically a consensus
6 view on what the ridership issue is.

7 Can I have the next slide.

8 Finally the issue of tunneling and cost, as
9 the mayor indicated, Dr. Ashaf Montabe (phonetic)
10 will be speaking to you shortly about the issues of
11 tunneling.

12 I want to preview that by pointing out that
13 we looked extensively at the issues of tunneling
14 cost and risk in the two alignments, and we both
15 agree that there's fewer miles of tunneling along
16 the Antelope Valley, and there's better conditions
17 for tunneling along the Antelope Valley.

18 As a result, we both agree that there would
19 be significant cost savings in going through the
20 Antelope Valley, even allowing for the extra length
21 of normal surface construction.

22 But more importantly, as will be pointed
23 out, that there's a much lower risk for
24 construction-related delay, cost overrun. In fact,
25 we believe that in many scenarios, you could have

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1 the project in that region open as much as six or
2 seven years earlier by going through the
3 Antelope Valley.

4 Also, as will be pointed out, the I-5
5 alignment follows a major earthquake fault for over
6 20 miles. It basically goes right through it, right

7 along it. Those will pose more risks for riders.
8 And also more maintenance costs.

9 With that, then I would like to turn it
10 over --

11 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: Can I make a couple
12 of -- as long as you are standing up there.

13 First of all, when you come down to your
14 written statements, it would be very helpful to know
15 where you get the six- to nine-minute --

16 MR. BOB SCHAEVITZ: That came from your
17 staff, sir. This goes back to the year 1999.

18 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: No. We have done
19 additional studies.

20 MR. BOB SCHAEVITZ: I'm not aware that they
21 are in the EIR.

22 MR. JOSEPH PETRILLO: We're not aware. So
23 we would appreciate if you would do that analysis.

24 The second thing, you made a statement about
25 the equivalent financial benefit between doing this

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1 or that.

2 We would like to see that for your comments,
3 rather than just the statement because it's

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